Report

13th “Japanese Culture Presentation Contest”
(for high school students, in English)
Organized by the University of Kochi, Department of Cultural Studies
Time ‘Culture Day’ (November 3, 2026), 13:00～16:00
Venue University of Kochi, Eikokuji campus (room A211)





Winning presentations:

1位　大垣日本大学高等学校
(Watanabe Marin, Watanabe Maria)
The Spirit of *ojigi*

2位　清心女子高等学校
(Shichi Hitomi, Miyake Suzu)
Beyond the Steam: Who is Japanese Bath Culture Really for?

3位　愛光高等学校
(Inoue Sakura, Fujiwara Saki)
Happy Soles, Happy Soul

Jury members:

Jonathan Helmlinger, Mark Johnson,
Shiraiwa Hideki



Seven pairs from six different high schools, from four prefectures, competed in our 13th presentation contest. As always, they had to present a talk about an aspect of Japanese culture in English, using visual aids of their choice (but no PowerPoint). This year jury members listened to and evaluated talks about topics as varied as fireworks, footwear, and Hikone castle. It was the team from Ōgaki Nihon Daigaku high school that had come all the way from Gifu that won the first prize: a book coupon of five thousand yen for both presenters. They talked about “the spirit of *ojigi*”, the fine art of bowing we all are so familiar with in Japan but can be hard to explain to foreigners (when to bow, how deep to bow etc.). They were followed by one of the teams of the Seishin Joshi high school in Okayama: they talked about *onsen* (Japanese hot springs) and pocketed book coupons of three thousand yen each. The third team to win a book coupon prize was the team from Aikō high school in Ehime, who convinced the jury with a talk about taking off your shoes when entering a house, that wonderful Japanese custom. They won two book coupons of two thousand yen each.

Overall, the level was high and all of the participants performed well enough to deserve the book prize (a book in English about composing haiku). We look forward to seeing more participants from outside of Kochi, and to awarding teams from within the prefecture some of the top prizes next time.